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ART. VI. — *The History of the Navy of the United States of America*. By J. FENIMORE COOPER. In Two Volumes. 8vo. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard. 1839.

MR. COOPER has made a valuable addition to the history of the country, in the work before us. He appears to have used a commendable diligence in searching out whatever facts our early history affords, illustrative of the origin and growth of the national navy, and has dressed them out in a form as attractive, perhaps, as the unconnected nature of the events, and the meagreness of the annals from which he derived his materials, permitted.

With the exception of a few irregular exploits, and the more remarkable engagement of Paul Jones, in the *Bon Homme Richard*, in the revolutionary war, together with the capture of the *Insurgent*, by Commodore Truxton, in the *Constellation*, during our naval hostilities with France, in 1799, but few incidents occurred at those periods, of sufficient importance to come down to us with much minuteness of detail. These are all narrated by Mr. Cooper with sufficient clearness and vivacity. Our navy, both as it regards its ships and officers, can scarcely be said to have had a connected existence, from its first creation, during the revolutionary contest, until the commencement of the war against Tripoli. On the breaking out of that war, it was put on a more permanent and respectable footing, than it had hitherto obtained; and, in the course of it, the foundation of that character, which it formed for itself in the late war with England, was laid in the brilliant actions of Preble, Decatur, and Somers. Most of the officers, who became distinguished during the last war, commenced their career at Tripoli, and received their early professional impressions in a school, which has conferred the deepest obligations on the Navy, and on the country. The burning of the frigate *Philadelphia*, during this war, may, indeed, be justly rated among the most brilliant achievements of the navy. It is described by Mr. Cooper in his best style, and we very reluctantly forego the pleasure of transferring it to our pages. We also intended, had our limits allowed, to extract his account of one of Commodore Preble's attacks on the gunboats and batteries of Tripoli, in August, 1804; a sketch which conveys a very lively idea of the desperate courage

evinced by the officers of our young navy throughout the whole of that struggle.

In approaching nearer our own times, the incidents of the late war with England, for the naval history of which more abundant materials exist, are narrated with greater detail. Among the earliest events recorded by our author, is the escape of the *Constitution*, under Commodore Isaac Hull, from a fleet of British ships, in July, 1812. The story itself, and the style of its narrator, are both so spirited, that we cannot deny ourselves the satisfaction of laying it before our readers.

“ As the day opened, three sail were discovered on the star-board quarter of the *Constitution*, and three more astern. This was the squadron of Commodore Broke, which had been gradually closing with the American frigate during the night, and was now just out of gunshot. As the ships slowly varied their positions, when the mists were entirely cleared away, the *Constitution* had two frigates on her lee quarter, and a ship of the line, two frigates, a brig, and a schooner astern. All the strangers had English colors flying.

“ It now fell quite calm, and the *Constitution* hoisted out her boats, and sent them ahead to tow, with a view to keep the ship out of the reach of the enemy's shot. At the same time, she whipt up one of the main deck guns to the spar deck, and run it out aft, as a stern chaser, getting a long eighteen off the fore-castle, also, for a similar purpose. Two more of the twenty-fours below were run out of the cabin windows, with the same object, though it was found necessary to cut away some of the wood-work of the stern frame, in order to make room.

“ By six o'clock, the wind, which continued very light and baffling, came out from the northward of west, when the ship's head was got round to the southward, and all the light canvass, that would draw, was set. Soon after, the nearest frigate, the *Shannon*, opened with her bow guns, and continued firing for about ten minutes, but, perceiving she could not reach the *Constitution*, she ceased. At half past six, Captain Hull sounded in twenty-six fathoms, when, finding that the enemy was likely to close, as he was enabled to put the boats of two ships on one, and was also favored by a little more air than the *Constitution*, all the spare rope that could be found, and which was fit for the purpose, was payed down into the cutters, bent on, and a kedge was run out, near half a mile ahead, and let go. At a signal given, the crew clapped on, and walked away with the ship, overrunning and tripping the kedge, as she came up with the end of the line. While this was doing, fresh lines and another

kedge were carried ahead, and in this manner, though out of sight of land, the frigate had glided away from her pursuers, before they discovered the manner in which it was done. It was not long, however, before the enemy resorted to the same expedient. At half past seven, the *Constitution* had a little air, when she set her ensign, and fired a shot at the *Shannon*, the nearest ship astern. At eight, it fell calm again, and further recourse was had to the boats and the kedges, the enemy's vessels having a light air, and drawing ahead, towing, sweeping, and kedging. By nine, the nearest frigate, the *Shannon*, on which the English had put most of their boats, was closing fast, and there was every prospect, notwithstanding the steadiness and activity of the *Constitution's* people, that the frigate just mentioned, would get near enough to cripple her, when her capture by the rest of the squadron would be inevitable. At this trying moment, the best spirit prevailed in the ship. Everything was stoppered, and Captain Hull was not without hopes, even should he be forced into action, of throwing the *Shannon* astern by his fire, and of maintaining his distance from the other vessels. It was known that the enemy could not tow very near, as it would have been easy to sink his boats with the stern guns of the *Constitution*, and not a man in the latter vessel showed a disposition to despondency. Officers and men relieved each other regularly at the duty, and, while the former threw themselves down on deck to catch short naps, the people slept at their guns.

“ This was one of the most critical moments of the chase. The *Shannon* was fast closing, as has been just stated, while the *Guerriere* was about as near on the larboard quarter. An hour promised to bring the struggle to an issue, when, suddenly, at nine minutes past nine, a light air from the southward struck the ship, bringing her to windward. The beautiful manner in which this advantage was improved, excited admiration, even in the enemy. As the breeze was seen coming, the ship's sails were trimmed, and, as soon as she was under command, she was brought close up to the wind, on the larboard tack ; the boats were all dropped in alongside ; those that belonged to the davits were run up, while the others were just lifted clear of the water, by purchases on the spare spars, stowed outboard, where they were in readiness to be used again at a moment's notice. As the ship came by the wind, she brought the *Guerriere* nearly on her lee beam, when that frigate opened a fire from her broadside. While the shot of this vessel were just falling short of them, the people of the *Constitution* were hoisting up their boats, with as much steadiness as if the duty was performing in a friendly port. In about

an hour, however, it fell nearly calm again, when Captain Hull ordered a quantity of the water started, to lighten the ship. More than two thousand gallons were pumped out, and the boats were sent ahead again to tow. The enemy now put nearly all his boats on the Shannon, the nearest ship astern ; and a few hours of prodigious exertion followed, the people of the Constitution being compelled to supply the place of numbers by their activity and zeal. The ships were close by the wind, and every thing that would draw was set, and the Shannon was slowly, but steadily, forging ahead. About noon, of this day, there was a little relaxation from labor, owing to the occasional occurrence of cat's paws, by watching which closely, the ship was urged through the water. But, at a quarter past twelve, the boats were again sent ahead, and the toilsome work of towing and kedging was renewed.

“ At one o'clock, a strange sail was discovered, nearly to leeward. At this moment, the four frigates of the enemy were about one point on the lee quarter of the Constitution, at long gunshot, the *Africa*, and the two prizes, being on the lee beam. As the wind was constantly baffling, any moment might have brought a change, and placed the enemy to windward. At seven minutes before two, the *Belvidere*, then the nearest ship, began to fire with her bow guns, and the Constitution opened with her stern chasers. On board the latter ship, however, it was soon found to be dangerous to use the main deck guns, the transoms having so much rake, the windows being so high, and the guns so short, that every explosion lifted the upper deck, and threatened to blow out the stern frame. Perceiving, moreover, that his shot did little or no execution, Captain Hull ordered the firing to cease at half past two.

“ For several hours, the enemies' frigates were now within gunshot, sometimes towing and kedging, and at others endeavouring to close with the puffs of air that occasionally passed. At seven in the evening, the boats of the Constitution were again ahead, the ship steering southwest half west, with an air so light as to be almost imperceptible. At half past seven she sounded in twenty-four fathoms. For four hours, the same toilsome duties were going on, until a little before eleven, when a light air from the southward struck the ship, and the sails, for the first time in many weary hours, were asleep. The boats instantly dropped along side, hooked on, and were all run up, with the exception of the first cutter. The top-gallant studding-sails and stay-sails were set as soon as possible, and, for about an hour, the people caught a little rest.

“ But at midnight it fell nearly calm again, though neither

the pursuers nor the pursued had recourse to the boats, probably from an unwillingness to disturb their crews. At two, A. M., it was observed, on board the *Constitution*, that the *Guerriere* had forged ahead, and was again off their lee beam. At this time the top-gallant studding-sails were taken in.

“ In this manner passed the night, and on the morning of the next day it was found, that three of the enemy's frigates were within long gunshot on the lee quarter, and the other at about the same distance on the lee beam. The *Africa* and the prizes were much further to leeward.

“ A little after daylight, the *Guerriere*, having drawn ahead sufficiently to be forward of the *Constitution*'s beam, tacked, when the latter ship did the same, in order to preserve her position to windward. An hour later the *Æolus* passed on the contrary tack so near, that it was thought by some, who observed the movement, that she ought to have opened her fire ; but, as that vessel was merely a twelve pounder frigate, and she was still at a considerable distance, it is quite probable her commander acted judiciously. By this time, there was sufficient wind to induce Captain Hull to hoist in his first cutter.

“ The scene, on the morning of this day, was very beautiful, and of great interest to the lovers of nautical exhibitions. The weather was mild and lovely, the sea smooth as a pond, and there was quite wind enough to remove the necessity of any of the extraordinary means of getting ahead, that had been so freely used during the previous eight-and-forty hours. All the English vessels had got on the same tack with the *Constitution* again, and the five frigates wore clouds of canvass from their trucks to the water. Including the American ship, eleven sail were in sight, and, shortly after, a twelfth appeared to windward, that was soon ascertained to be an American merchantmen. But the enemy were too intent on the *Constitution*, to regard any thing else, and, though it would have been easy to capture the ships to leeward, no attention appears to have been paid to them. With a view, however, to deceive the ship to windward, they hoisted American colors, when the *Constitution* set an English ensign, by way of warning the stranger to keep aloof.”

“ At meridian the wind began to blow a pleasant breeze, and the sound of the water, rippling under the bows of the vessel, was again heard. From this moment the noble old ship slowly drew ahead of all her pursuers, the sails being watched and tended in the best manner that consummate seamanship could dictate, until four, P. M., when the *Belvidere* was more than four miles astern, and the other vessels were thrown

behind in the same proportion, though the wind had again got to be very light.

“In this manner both parties kept pressing ahead and to windward, as fast as circumstances would allow, profiting by every change, and resorting to all the means of forcing vessels through the water, that are known to seamen. At a little before seven, however, there was every appearance of a heavy squall, accompanied by rain ; when the *Constitution* prepared to meet it with the coolness and discretion she had displayed throughout the whole affair. The people were stationed, and every thing was kept fast to the last moment, when, just before the squall struck the ship, the order was given to clew up and clew down. All the light canvass was furled, a second reef was taken in the mizen topsail, and the ship was brought under short sail, in an incredibly little time. The English vessels, observing this, began to let go and haul down without waiting for the wind, and, when they were shut in by the rain, they were steering in different directions to avoid the force of the expected squall. The *Constitution*, on the other hand, no sooner got its weight, than she sheeted home and hoisted her fore and main top-gallant sails, and while the enemy most probably believed her to be borne down by the pressure of the wind, steering free, she was flying away from them, on an easy bowline, at the rate of eleven knots.”

“Thus terminated a chase, that has become historical in the American Navy, for its length, closeness, and activity. On the part of the English, there were manifested much perseverance and seamanship, a ready imitation, and a strong desire to get along side of their enemy. But the glory of the affair was carried off by the officers and people of the *Constitution*. Throughout all the trying circumstances of this arduous struggle, this noble frigate, which had so lately been the subject of the sneers of the English critics, maintained the high character of a man-of-war. Even when pressed upon the hardest, nothing was hurried, confused, or slovenly, but the utmost steadiness, order, and discipline reigned in the ship.”— Vol. II. pp. 155 – 162.

The sequel of the naval events of the late war with England is related, in the course of the second volume of Mr. Cooper's work, with an ability corresponding with that of the description which we have quoted above. In interest, indeed, the second volume very far exceeds the first, owing, in part, to the more abundant materials within reach of the author, and also, in some degree, to the facts being familiar

to many of us, and having made a deep impression upon our minds at the time of their occurrence.

The whole of this portion of the work, describing our naval battles with England, is characterized by a remarkable tone of liberality towards that country, which compares most advantageously with those portions of the works of Brenton and James, in which the same events are described. We are not, indeed, without the apprehension, that Mr. Cooper's unwillingness to claim too much credit for our triumphs in this brilliant, though unequal struggle, may have led him to be more than just to England. That he has been so in one instance, and in that instance to the prejudice and depreciation of one of the most glorious of all our naval achievements, is too manifest. We allude to the battle of Lake Erie. He seems, moreover, to have labored to convey an unfair impression of the relative exertions of Commodore Perry and of Captain Elliott, his second in command, during the battle. The controversy, which he thus brings up, is not of our seeking. It is of so personal a nature, that we would gladly avoid it, if we could do so, consistently with critical honesty. But it is forced upon whoever undertakes to comment upon Mr. Cooper's book; and, however disagreeable the task thus imposed, we cannot be so indifferent to the truth respecting one of the most brilliant exploits, nor so unjust to one of the most glorious names, in our naval annals, as to permit what we regard as gross misrepresentations concerning them to pass, without remonstrance of ours, into accredited history.

Our limits do not permit us to quote the whole of Mr. Cooper's account of this battle, as, with the comments which we propose to make on it, our article would be so far extended as to exclude the few hints on the condition and prospects of the navy, with which we propose to conclude our task. By citing the pages in which we are called upon to correct errors, the reader, with the work before him, will be able to follow and appreciate the justness of our commentary.

As a first instance, in which an indisposition, on the part of Mr. Cooper, to commend and highly estimate the merits of Commodore Perry, may be detected, we would call attention to the fact, that, after having stated, on page 389, Volume II., the circumstances attending the removal of the heavy vessels over the bar of Erie harbour, he fails to com-

mend the seamanlike skill, ingenuity, and great despatch, with which that operation was performed, whilst, in all similar cases throughout the course of his work, even where far inferior interests are at stake, he evinces a lively perception of the merit displayed, and never fails to commend it strongly.

In order to elucidate the unfairness of Mr. Cooper's account of the battle, we will first copy his description of the relative position of the two squadrons at the time the action began.

“Captain Barclay (the British commander) had formed his line with the Chippeway, Mr. Campbell, armed with one gun on a pivot, in the van ; the Detroit, his own vessel, next ; and the Hunter, Lieutenant Bignall ; Queen Charlotte, Captain Finnis ; Lady Prevost, Lieutenant-Commandant Buchan ; and Little Belt, astern, in the order named. To oppose this line, the Ariel, of four long twelves, was stationed in the van, and the Scorpion, of one long and one short gun on circles, next her. The Lawrence, Captain Perry, came next ; the two schooners just mentioned keeping on her weather bow, having no quarters. The Caledonia, Lieutenant Turner, was the next astern, and the Niagara, Captain Elliott, was placed next to the Caledonia. These vessels were all up at the time, but the other light craft were more or less distant, each endeavouring to get into her berth. The order of battle for the remaining vessels, directed the Tigress to fall in astern of the Niagara, the Somers next, and the Porcupine and Trippe in the order named.” — Vol. II. pp. 391, 392.

Mr. Cooper subsequently states, that “the order of battle required them to form within half a cable's length of each other,” and as the Niagara was, as he states, in her station immediately before the action commenced, it follows, that she was only one cable's length astern of the Lawrence. Very soon after this, the action commenced with a shot from the Detroit at the Lawrence ; still the Niagara was in her station and within hail, for at this time Commodore Perry ordered the word to be passed by trumpet, through Captain Elliot, for the squadron to close, as before prescribed, to half cable-length's distance. Mr. Cooper does not mention the material fact, that this word was passed, through Captain Elliott, after the action commenced ; nor does he mention the equally material fact, that signal was now made for each vessel to engage her opponent, as designated in previous orders. Now the designated opponent of the Niagara was the Queen

Charlotte, a fact which Mr. Cooper mentions at the commencement of his account of the engagement, but does not advert to afterwards, when it was seen, that the Niagara did not seek her opponent, so long as Captain Elliott remained on board of her.

We are told (p. 393), that the action commenced a few minutes before meridian, when the Niagara was hailed from the Lawrence, and the signal made for each vessel to engage her opponent, as previously designated. Mr. Cooper goes on to state.

“ At this moment, the American vessels, in line, were edging down upon the English, those in van being necessarily nearer to the enemy than those astern of them, with the exception of the Ariel and Scorpion, which two schooners had been ordered to keep to windward of the Lawrence. As the Detroit had an armament of long guns, Captain Barclay manifested his judgment in commencing the action in this manner, and, in a short time, the firing between that ship, the Lawrence, and the two schooners at the head of the American line, became animated. A few minutes later, the vessels astern began to fire, and the action became general, but distant. The Lawrence, however, appeared to be the principal aim of the enemy, and, before the fire had lasted any material time, the Detroit, Hunter, and Queen Charlotte, were directing most of their efforts against her. The American brig endeavoured to close, and did succeed in getting within reach of canister, though not without suffering materially, as she fanned down upon the enemy. At this time, the support of the two schooners ahead, which were well commanded and fought, was of the greatest moment to her, for the vessels astern, though in the line, could be of little use in diverting the fire, on account of their positions and distance.”—Vol. II. p. 393.

Where was the Niagara at this time, that she could not engage her designated opponent, the seventeen-gun ship Queen Charlotte, and thus relieve the Commodore, and assume her proper share in this unequal combat? If the Lawrence “did succeed in getting within reach of canister, though not without suffering materially, as she fanned down upon the enemy,” why could not the Niagara, which, a few moments before, had answered a hail from the Commodore, and which had not, as yet, “suffered materially,” or at all, also “fan down” to relieve her sorely pressed Commo-

dore, and assail the Queen Charlotte, which, Mr. Cooper tells us, the Niagara had been destined specially to "lie against"? If "the support of the two schooners ahead," which "were well commanded and fought," though they mounted together only six guns, "was of the greatest moment" to the Lawrence, of how much greater moment would the support of the Niagara have been, had she, mounting twenty guns, been also "well commanded and fought"!

Mr. Cooper next tells us, that

"After the fire had lasted some time, the Niagara hailed the Caledonia, and directed the latter to make room for the brig to pass ahead. Mr. Turner put his helm up in the most dashing manner, and continued to near the enemy, until he was closer to his line, perhaps, than the commanding vessel; keeping up as warm a fire as his small armament would allow. The Niagara now became the vessel next astern of the Lawrence."—Vol. II. pp. 393, 394.

Here was conduct worthy of Daniel Turner, worthy of the noble fellow-townsmen under whom he served. Convert Mr. Cooper's "perhaps" into a certainty, and admit that Lieutenant Turner was closer to the enemy's line than his commander; if Lieutenant Turner, in the little Caledonia, of three guns, did not hesitate to "put his helm up in the most dashing manner, and continue to near the enemy, until he was closer to his line, perhaps, than the commanding vessel, keeping up as warm a fire as his small armament would allow," why could not Captain Elliott, in the Niagara, of twenty guns, being so near to the Caledonia as to be embarrassed by her movements, have "put his helm up," in the same "dashing manner," until he too had been "closer to the enemy" than the commanding vessel, and broadside and broadside with the ship which he had been destined "to lie against"? This would have been in strict conformity with the last words of Commodore Perry to his commanders, while delivering them their written orders on the eve of the battle, (and to which Mr. Cooper nowhere adverts,) telling them, that he could not advise them better, than, in the words of Lord Nelson, "If you lay your enemy alongside, you cannot be out of your place." But Captain Elliott, in the Niagara, did not imitate Lieutenant Turner's "most dashing manner" of bearing up. On the contrary, the effect of his order, given in violation of the order of battle fixed by the

Commodore, was to place the *Caledonia* between him and the enemy, instead of leaving this small vessel, unprotected by bulwarks, partially under cover of his bow, as the *Ariel* and *Scorpion* were under cover of the bow of the *Lawrence*. It is a little singular, that Mr. Cooper, having thus shown a true taste for what is noble in a naval officer, by eulogizing Lieutenant Turner for the dashing manner in which he bore down upon the enemy, should subsequently commend Captain Elliott for the directly opposite conduct of hauling up and keeping at long shots, and partially under cover, when he says (p. 402), "By steering for the head of the enemy's line, the latter was prevented from gaining the wind by tacking; and, when Captain Elliott imitated this manœuvre in the *Niagara*, the American squadron had a very commanding position, of which Captain Perry promptly availed himself." Lieutenant Turner is commended for dashing into the thickest of the fight, Captain Elliott for changing his Commodore's order of battle, and hauling out of it. Taking "a very commanding position" without the reach of danger, is mentioned with the same tone of commendation, and in the same paragraph, as rushing into the midst of it to conquer!

The account of the battle is thus continued;

"The effect of the cannonade was necessarily to deaden the wind, and for nearly two hours there was very little air. During all this time, the weight of the enemy's fire continued to be directed at the *Lawrence*; even the *Queen Charlotte*, having filled, passed the *Hunter*, and got under the stern of the *Detroit*, where she kept up a destructive cannonade on this devoted vessel. The effect of these united attacks, besides producing a great slaughter on board the *Lawrence*, was nearly to dismantle her, and at the end of two hours and a half, agreeably to Captain Perry's report, the British vessels having filled, and the wind beginning to increase, the two squadrons moved slowly ahead, the *Lawrence* necessarily dropping astern, and partially out of the combat. At this moment the *Niagara* passed to the westward, a short distance to the windward of the *Lawrence*, steering for the head of the enemy's line, and the *Caledonia* followed, to leeward."

— Vol. II. p. 394.

When Mr. Cooper states, that "the *Niagara* hailed the *Caledonia*," and gave the order which led Lieutenant Turner to "put his helm up, in the most dashing manner," to run down upon the enemy, he merely informs us, that "the

Niagara now became the next vessel to the *Lawrence*." He leaves us under the impression, that the *Niagara* was in a position to take her fair share in the fight. It is only at the close of the next paragraph, that the initiated may dimly discover what became of the *Niagara*, when the *Caledonia* bore up to make room for her. "The *Niagara* passed to the westward, a short distance to the windward of the *Lawrence*, steering for the head of the enemy's line, and the *Caledonia* followed, to leeward." In the language of the land, this means simply, that the *Caledonia* passed between the enemy and her disabled *Commodore*, offering such feeble succour as she was able, whilst the stout *Niagara* placed the *Commodore*, as well as the *Caledonia*, between her and the enemy, as a double shield of protection. This is the true meaning of Mr. Cooper's own account; we might cite documents which Mr. Cooper has failed to use, to show, that, at this time, the *Niagara* lay to, with her maintop-sail to the mast, and her gib brailed up, having the *Lawrence* between her and the enemy.

During two mortal hours, then, "the weight of the enemy's fire continued to be directed at the *Lawrence*; even the *Queen Charlotte*, having filled, passed the *Hunter*, and got under the stern of the *Detroit*, where she kept up a destructive cannonade on this devoted vessel." And the *Niagara*, which had been destined "to lie against" the *Queen Charlotte*,—which might so easily have followed the little *Caledonia* into the thickest of the fight,—and which should rather have shown her the way thither, had been withdrawn by her commander, so as to make a cover of the devoted vessel, which he should, in conformity with his instructions, no less than in obedience to every noble prompting of an officer and a man, have hastened to rescue.

The *Lawrence*, abandoned by her consort, and left to struggle, single-handed, with the whole British fleet, had been utterly cut to pieces; twenty-two of her crew were killed, and sixty-one wounded. Only one gun could still be used on board of her, and the services of her noble commander were necessary to load and fire that one. The battle seemed to all to be lost, and the British seamen were already cheering for their anticipated triumph. Perry had fought nobly, and might well have shared the necessary fate of his vessel, leaving the responsibility and disgrace of defeat

to the unworthy associate, who had done every thing to secure it, when the day was again retrieved and won, by as noble an inspiration as naval history, through all times and ages, can afford. It was in this apparently hopeless moment of the battle, that the second lieutenant of the *Lawrence*, Dulany Forrest, said to Commodore Perry, "That brig (the *Niagara*) will not help us; see how he keeps off; he will not come to close action." "I'll fetch him up," said Commodore Perry. He ordered his boat to be manned, and, as he shoved off from the *Lawrence*, said, "If a victory is to be gained, I'll gain it!" And well did he redeem his words; for, perhaps, of no naval battle may it be so truly said, that it was won by the personal exertions of the commander. How different the handling of the *Niagara* by Captain Elliott and by Commodore Perry. Under the former, at long shots, or under the protection of the *Lawrence* and *Caledonia*, and part of the time hove to and motionless, with her maintop-sail to the mast, and jib brailed up, seeking after the "very commanding position," which Mr. Cooper eulogizes; under Commodore Perry, changing her course eight points, or a whole right angle, and bearing down, under a press of sail, to encounter, not merely that *Queen Charlotte*, her opponent, which she had hitherto so successfully avoided, but the whole British fleet. Clear of her first commander, who had volunteered to go away from the scene of action, to bring up the small vessels, which were at a distance from the fight, the *Niagara* seems instinct with a new life. But we will let Mr. Cooper tell the tale, as here the facts are not susceptible of mystification.

"At this critical moment, the *Niagara* came steadily down, within half pistol shot of the enemy, standing between the *Chippeway* and *Lady Prevost*, on one side, and the *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte*, and *Hunter*, on the other. In passing, she poured in her broadsides, starboard and larboard, ranged ahead of the ships, luffed athwart their bows, and continued delivering a close and deadly fire. The shrieks from the *Detroit* proved that the tide of battle had turned. At the same moment, the gun vessels and *Caledonia* were throwing in close discharges of grape and canister, astern. A conflict so fearfully close, and so deadly, was necessarily short. In fifteen or twenty minutes after the *Niagara* bore up, a hail was passed, among the small vessels, that the enemy had struck, and an officer of the *Queen Charlotte* appeared on the taffrail of that ship, waving a white handkerchief, bent to a boarding-pike." — Vol. II. pp. 395, 396.

It was in this way, 'that the battle of Lake Erie was won, eminently, by the exertions of Commodore Perry, and equally so, in defiance of the studious want of exertion of Captain Elliott, his second in command. Yet we find, in a work, professing to give a faithful history of the American Navy, a disposition to disparage this, its most glorious event, and to distribute equal meeds of fame to the noble chief, who achieved it mainly by his own personal exertions, and the unworthy coadjutor, who did all that depended upon him to frustrate it.

As an evidence of a disposition to disparage the character of this victory, we will cite the fact, that the relative force of the two squadrons is not correctly stated by Mr. Cooper. He says, in his review of the battle ;

“ It is not easy, to make a just comparison between the forces of the hostile squadrons, on this occasion. Under some circumstances, the Americans would have been materially superior, while, in others, the enemy might possess the advantage, in, perhaps, an equal degree. In those, under which the action was actually fought, the peculiar advantages, and disadvantages, were nearly equalized, the lightness of the wind preventing either of the two largest of the American vessels from profiting by their peculiar mode of efficiency, until quite near the close of the engagement, and particularly favoring the armament of the Detroit ; while the smoothness of the water rendered the light vessels of the Americans very destructive, as soon as they could be got within a proper range. The Detroit has been represented, on good authority, to be both a heavier and stronger ship, than either of the American brigs, and the Queen Charlotte proved to be a much finer vessel, than had been expected ; while the Lady Prevost was found to be a large warlike schooner. It was, perhaps, unfortunate for the enemy, that the armaments of these two vessels were not available, under the circumstances which rendered the Detroit so efficient, as it destroyed the unity of their efforts. In short, the battle, for near half its duration, appears to have been fought, so far as efficiency was concerned, by the long guns of the two squadrons. This was particularly favoring the Detroit, and the American gun vessels, while the latter fought under the advantage of smooth water, and the disadvantage of having no quarters. The sides of the Detroit, which were unusually stout, were filled with shot, that did not penetrate. In the number of men at quarters, there could have been no great disparity in the two squadrons.”— Vol. II. pp. 399, 400.

If it were possible to unravel this web of opposing evidence and contending opinions, the conclusion would rather remain, (even without taking into the account, that the writer is a countryman of ours, sufficiently patriotic to have won for himself the cognomen of "American,") that the American force was in no respect inferior, in ships and men, to the British. The facts are quite otherwise. In the account of the British force, where it is presented collectively by Mr. Cooper, the vessels, composing it, have an armament of fifty-nine guns. Subsequently, the Chippeway and Little Belt, not enumerated in this list, are found taking part in the action; the Chippeway is there stated to have had one gun, but the armament of the Little Belt is not mentioned. As we know, from other sources than Mr. Cooper's book, that the British force consisted of sixty-three guns, we infer, that the additional three were mounted on the Little Belt. The American force, as enumerated by Mr. Cooper, amounted to fifty-five guns; but one of the vessels contained on the list, the Ohio, of one gun, was absent from the action, on distant service. Thus it strangely happens, that, in the general enumeration of the opposing squadrons, from which almost every reader would receive his abiding impression of their relative forces, two British vessels are omitted, which appear as taking part in the action, while, on the contrary, one American vessel is enumerated, which did not take part in it. Even Brenton, so prejudiced in all his accounts of the naval actions between England and the United States, admits, that, "in number and weight of guns, the two squadrons were nearly equal: but the Americans had every advantage in the number and quality of the men." The facts of the case, with regard to the relative numbers of guns and men, (and, as these facts cannot be gleaned from Mr. Cooper's book, we the rather mention them,) are simply these. The British squadron consisted of six vessels, mounting, in all, sixty-three guns; the American squadron consisted of nine vessels, mounting fifty-four guns. With regard to the absence of any great disparity of men, stated by Mr. Cooper, it is sufficient to cite the fact mentioned by Commodore Perry, in writing to General Harrison, that the number of British prisoners taken on the occasion, exceeded that of the Americans, who went originally into action.

Mr. Cooper's criticism of this battle (p. 402) is written

with a very different spirit from that, with which he eulogizes other victories, far less suited to excite the enthusiasm of an American. He states objections, that have been made to Captain Perry's mode of attack, and then argues with so little zeal, in refutation of them, as to leave the reader in doubt, as to which side his own opinion leans ; so that the charge of having committed errors, which the reader now first hears insinuated, remains, and leaves, on the whole, an unfavorable impression. Even the heroic exploit of leaving the *Lawrence*, when wrecked and beaten, to pass under a heavy fire to the *Niagara*, in order to make a last chivalrous effort to retrieve the day, by taking her into the thickest of the fight, to the station which he had originally assigned to her, and from which she had so sedulously kept aloof, is disparaged, in an elaborate note, in which we are told, that "Captain Elliott was much longer in the same boat, and passed nearly through the whole line twice." It is not mentioned, that Captain Perry passed from under the guns of the enemy, when the *Lawrence* lay a wreck, exposed to a deadly fire, directed at him, to the *Niagara*, for the purpose of returning instantly with her, into the midst of the enemy's squadron, while Captain Elliott, on the contrary, passed from the *Niagara*, still so far beyond the reach of danger, as yet to have had only two men wounded, to that portion of the squadron which was yet more remote. Mr. Cooper concludes this note, which bears so much evidence of an intention to disparage Commodore Perry, for the benefit of Captain Elliott, by saying ; "There was, no doubt, a personal risk, in all the boats, but there was personal risk everywhere, on such an occasion."

In evidence, that the personal risk was not everywhere the same in this action, we will quote some facts stated by Mr. Cooper, with regard to the casualties in the American squadron. Speaking of the unparalleled carnage on board the *Lawrence*, he says,

"Of her crew, twenty-two were killed and sixty-one wounded, most of the latter severely. When Captain Perry left her, taking with him four of his people, there remained on board but fifteen sound men. The *Niagara* had two killed, and twenty-five wounded, or about one-fourth of all at quarters." — Vol. II. p. 397.

He subsequently says,

"Although the *Niagara* suffered in a much less degree,

twenty-seven men killed and wounded, in a ship's company that mustered little more than one hundred souls at quarters, under ordinary circumstances, would be thought a large proportion." — Vol. II. pp. 398, 399.

Here, certainly, was considerable personal risk, though the killed of the Niagara, compared with that of the Lawrence, was only in the proportion of two to twenty-two. But, if the reader infers, and Mr. Cooper does not lead him to infer otherwise, that the killed and wounded of the Niagara were struck by the side of Captain Elliott, the inference would be most erroneous. We learn, from other sources than Mr. Cooper's book, that two men were wounded on board the Niagara, up to the time of Captain Elliott's leaving her, and two men were also wounded on board of the Somers, to which vessel Captain Elliott repaired, and we will suppose, that these two men were wounded after Captain Elliott took command of her. It follows, that of the total killed and wounded, of the squadron, amounting, in all, to twenty-seven killed, and ninety-six wounded, twenty-four were killed, and eighty-six wounded at the side of Commodore Perry, while four were wounded at the side of Captain Elliott. Though Mr. Cooper says, "there was personal risk everywhere," he will scarcely deny, that here the degree was very different, being as four to one hundred and ten.

The moral of Mr. Cooper's account of the battle of Lake Erie, seems to be summed up in the following words; "For his conduct, in this battle, Captain Perry received a gold medal from Congress. Captain Elliott also received a gold medal." Throughout the account of this battle, there seems to us, for the reasons we have enumerated, to be an effort to disparage the brilliancy of the victory generally, and to detract from the glory of the hero who won it, by an attempt to raise the name of Captain Elliott to the same unsullied eminence with that of his chief. We are told, that "Captain Perry, in his Report of the action, eulogized the conduct of his second in command, Captain Elliott." We are not told, that Captain Perry subsequently recalled this eulogy in the most solemn manner, explaining, in a letter to the Secretary of the Navy (bringing charges against Captain Elliott) the noble and generous motives, which led him into error.

"After the battle was won, (he says,) I felt no disposition rigidly to examine into the conduct of any of the officers of the

fleet ; and, strange as the behaviour of Captain Elliott had been, yet I would not allow myself to come to a decided opinion, that an officer, who had so handsomely conducted himself on a former occasion, as I then, in common with the public, had been led to suppose Captain Elliott had, could possibly be guilty of cowardice or treachery. The subsequent conduct, also, of Captain Elliott ; the readiness with which he undertook the most minute services ; the unfortunate situation in which he now stood, which he lamented to me, and his marked endeavours to conciliate protection, were all well calculated to have their effect. But, still more than all, I was actuated by a strong desire, that in the fleet I then had the honor to command, there should be nothing but harmony after the victory they had gained, and that nothing should transpire, which would bring reproach upon any part of it, or convert into crimination the praises to which they were entitled, and which I wished them all to share and enjoy.

“ These, Sir, are the reasons, which induced me, at the time, not to bring on an inquiry into his conduct. The cause and propriety of my now doing so, will, I trust, require but few explanations. I would willingly, for my own sake, as well as his, after the course I had pursued, for the purpose of shielding him, have still remained silent ; but this Captain Elliott will not allow me to do. He has acted upon the idea, that by assailing my character he shall repair his own.

“ After he was left in the command, on Lake Erie, I was soon informed of the intrigues he was there practising, some of which are detailed in these charges. These I should not have regarded, as long as they were private ; but I then determined and declared, to many of my friends in the navy, that, should Captain Elliott ever give publicity to his misrepresentations, I would then demand an investigation of the whole of his conduct. This necessity is now forced upon me.”

From the affidavits of evidence, accompanying the charges against Captain Elliott, forwarded by Commodore Perry to the Secretary of the Navy, and from other affidavits, subsequently furnished by other officers of the squadron on Lake Erie, the signers of which occupied important stations during the fight, and have ever been held among the most honorable and high-minded officers in the navy, it would have been an easy task for us to have shown the manner in which the battle of Lake Erie was won by Commodore Perry, and jeopardized by Captain Elliott, and to have assigned to the chieftain and his associate their just meeds of glory and dishonor. Finding, however, in the work of Mr. Cooper itself, the means of

arriving at the truth, by an analysis of the facts, so as to remove the unjust impression, which the statements and commentaries together are suited to convey, we have preferred to avail ourselves of the materials which he has himself afforded, to vindicate the claims of a departed hero to the gratitude of his country, and the uses of history from unjust perversion, to serve the temporary interests of persons or parties.

Apart from the serious objections, which we have been reluctantly compelled to urge against Mr. Cooper's book, with regard to his unfair account of the battle of Lake Erie, we have little to say against the tone and spirit of its execution. We might, perhaps, also except the efforts which he makes to vindicate the conduct of some officers, who have been the occasion of dishonor to the country ; a vindication which is the more offensive, because it is contrasted with the disparagement of others, whose reputation is cherished among the proudest national recollections. His style, though incorrect and inelegant, is strong ; and, for the sake of its strength and energy, we can excuse the want of polish, the frequent recurrence of favorite ideas, such as "facts invariably preceding opinion, in a country as purely practical as this," and the constant and awkward use of sea-phrases, often unintelligible to the ordinary reader, even when properly applied. With these exceptions, the work has the merit of liberality, talent, and ingenuity. The narratives of battles are almost always nervous and striking, and the criticisms, which accompany them, generally just and discriminating.

The Introduction of the work is a highly sensible and important paper, in which Mr. Cooper has stated the result of his reflections on the condition and wants of the navy. His ideas are just in themselves, and valuable, as the fruit of such long study of a favorite theme. We should be glad to make room here for the whole of his Introduction, but must restrict ourselves to a few extracts.

"While those who have reflected, have clearly foreseen, that the republic must assert its place in the scale of nations, defend its territory, and maintain its rights, principally by means of a powerful marine, all are compelled to acknowledge, that the growth of this branch of the public service has been slow, uncertain, and marked by a policy as timid as it has been fluctuating."

"It has long been confessed, that America possessed every

qualification for the creation of a powerful navy, but men and money. The necessary skill, the required aptitude for sea service, and the other requisites, have always been admitted ; but it has been asserted, that neither the finances, nor the population, would allow of the draw on their resources, that is unavoidably connected with a strong marine. The two deficiencies, if they actually existed, would certainly be fatal.

“ In the years 1812, 1813, and 1814, the republic expended considerably more than \$ 50,000,000 on its current military operations, without reference to the large sums, that were subsequently paid, on the same account. This war lasted but two years and eight months, and, during the first season, its operations were very limited. \$ 30,000,000 more were paid, on account of military charges, in the two years of peace that immediately succeeded, making a total of \$ 80,000,000. It is known, that even this large sum falls materially short of the truth. During the same five years, the money expended on the navy amounted to only \$ 30,000,000, although the peculiar nature of the service on the Lakes involved an enormous and an unusual expenditure ; and a war with Algiers occurred, during which the country maintained, afloat, a much larger force than it had ever previously employed. In addition, the greater part of this expenditure was the cost of new constructions. It follows, that America expended nearly two dollars on her army, and its military operations, in the war of 1812, for every dollar expended on her navy, including the expense of building most of the costly vessels of the service. Had the fact been precisely reversed, it is probable, that the proportions required by good policy would have been better observed, and there can be but little doubt, that the country would have reaped the advantage ; for no serious invasion of America will ever be attempted, in the face of a strong fleet, after the country shall be provided with docks and arsenals, by means of which, accidental reverses can be remedied. By dividing the large sum expended on the army and navy, between the years 1812 and 1816, inclusively, \$ 40,000,000 would have fallen to the share of each branch of the service, which would have given \$ 8,000,000 a year to the navy. This sum would be amply sufficient, to maintain a force of twenty sail of the line, with a suitable number of small vessels, to cruise in company. Against such a fleet, no European power could have attempted an invasion of a coast, so distant from its own resources.” “ In the contest of 1812, the vessels of war were directed to destroy the ships they took, because the enemy was known so closely to infest the coast, that it was impossible to get a prize in, whereas a strong force would put an end to all sorts of blockades.”

“ But the probationary period of the American marine is passing away, and the body of the people are beginning to look forward to the appearance of their fleets on the ocean. It is no longer thought, there is an unfitness in the republic's possessing heavy ships ; and the opinion of the country, in this, as in other respects, is slowly rising to the level of its wants. Still, many lingering prejudices remain in the public mind, in connexion with this all-important subject, and some that threaten the service with serious injury. Of these, the most prominent are, the mode in which the active vessels are employed ; a neglect of the means of creating seamen for the public service ; the fact, that there is no force in commission on the American coast ; the substitution of money for pride and self-respect, as the aim of military men ; and the impairing of discipline, and lessening the deference for the justice of the state, by the denial of rank.”

“ It will be clear to the dullest mind, that the evolutions of a fleet, and, in a greater or less degree, its success, must be dependent on the qualities of its poorest vessels, since its best cannot abandon their less fortunate consorts to the enemy. The naval history of the world abounds with instances, in which the efforts of the first sea-captains, of their respective ages, have been frustrated by the defects of a portion of the ships under their command. To keep a number of vessels in compact order, to cause them to preserve their weatherly position, in gales and adverse winds, and to bring them all, as near as possible, up to the standard that shall be formed by the most judicious and careful commander, is one of the highest aims of naval experience. On the success of such efforts, depend the results of naval evolutions, more frequently than on any dexterity in fighting guns. An efficient fleet can no more be formed without practice in squadrons, than an efficient army without evolutions in brigades. By not keeping ships in squadrons, there will also be less emulation, and consequently less improvement.”

“ By putting in commission six or eight two-decked ships, and by causing them to appear, from time to time, on all the more important stations, on this side of the two great southern capes, the country, at no material additional cost, would obtain the several objects of practice in fleets, of comparative trials of the qualities of the most important class of vessels in the navy, of a higher state of discipline, and of a vast improvement in the habits of subordination, on the part of commanders, a defect, that all experience shows, is peculiar to the desultory mode of service now in use, and which has produced more naval disasters in the world, than probably any other cause. In a word,

the principal ends of a navy can no more be obtained, by the services of single ships, than wars can be decided by armies, cut up into battalions. Small vessels are as indispensable, for lower schools of practice, as company drills in an army ; but squadrons alone can produce the highest class of officers, the steadiest discipline, or the desired objects.

“ In addition to this neglect of accustoming the service to the use of the particular sort of force, necessary to render a marine effective for great ends, the history of the world cannot, probably, supply a parallel to that forgetfulness, which the American government has manifested, of all the known incentives of human exertions, in the management of the navy.”

“ Next to personal reputation, military rank is the highest stimulus of a military life. Its possession enters into all the day-dreams of the young aspirant for fame and honors, is inseparable from self-respect, and is indissolubly connected with discipline.” “ For many years, all the promotions of the American marine were limited to three ! Even at this day, with full experience of the evils of a system of incentives so meagre, and of a concentration of rank so destructive of self-respect and discipline, the life of the American naval officer is cheered by only four promotions, two of which are little more than the changes that nature herself demands, by transferring the officer from the duty of a boy, to duty more becoming a man.”

“ It is not easy, fully to impress on the minds of civilians the immense results, that are dependent on a due division of military rank. The commission, which represents the power of the state, in a short time gets to be the substitute of personal qualities, and produces that prompt and nearly passive obedience, which are indispensable to the success of military movements.”

“ The rank of a captain in the navy never can be a sufficient inducement to attract the highest talents, in a country in which every species of preferment is open to competition. Hope has hitherto kept the service together, the want of fleets furnishing an apparent apology for trusting to the future. To pretend, however, to manage fleets, with officers of the same rank as the commanders of single vessels, infers as great an absurdity, as to pretend to manage ships with no other rank than that of a midshipman. There is, indeed, a greater connexion between rank and discipline as applied to fleets, than between rank and discipline as applied to ships.”

“ The necessity of creating higher rank in the navy, on account of its influence on other services, more especially when acting in concert with American fleets, has often been pointed out. The answer to this practical argument, has usually been

a high pretension, in behalf of the republic, to act agreeably to its own policy, and a right to insist, that any notion of superiority, that it may choose to attach to the station of a captain, in its own navy, shall be recognised by the agents of other governments. This extravagant idea can be supported by neither usage, reason, nor common sense. In the first place, all international questions should be settled by the general consent of states, and not by the peculiar policy of any particular community. As well might America pretend to say, its *chargés d'affaires* shall have the rank of ambassadors at foreign courts, as to say, that its captains, under any circumstances, shall have the rank of admirals on foreign stations." "The usages of nations must control this interest, as well as all others, that equally affect different states; and as there is nothing new, or peculiar, in captains occasionally commanding squadrons, under the temporary title of commodores, among all the naval powers of Christendom, other people may object to America's attaching a new importance to an old commission." "Admirals are as necessary to fleets, as captains to ships. The thing must exist, under some appellation or other; and, if the old term brings with it additional dignity, respect, authority, and adds fresh incentives to exertions, it is utter imbecility to discard it. There is no more fitness in calling the commander of a fleet a captain, or even a commodore, than in styling the first magistrate of the republic a justice of the peace."—Vol. I. pp. xiii. — xxxi.

A fact has just occurred, within our own waters, to illustrate the soundness of these remarks. We read, in the journals of the day, that the French Admiral Baudin, in command of the West India station, made a visit to Pensacola, while Commodore Shubrick, commanding our naval forces in the West Indies, was lying in the harbour. Owing to his inability to exchange courtesies, on equal terms, with an officer inferior to him in rank, in a foreign service, the French Admiral left the port prematurely. Yet both these officers were commanders-in-chief, and the American, probably, had under his orders the heaviest force. The difficulty consisted in the disparity of rank, the one being a duly commissioned admiral, the other only a post-captain, with the brevet rank of commodore, which likewise exists, as an inferior rank, in all other navies. We hope, for the sake of the discipline of the navy, and the attitude which our national pride would wish it to assume towards all foreign navies, both in peace and war, that the rank of admiral may be speedily established in it.

Another measure, of scarcely inferior importance to the creation of the rank of admiral, we consider to be the establishment of a naval academy for the education of midshipmen. If it were necessary to prove, that a preparatory school for the education of young officers for the navy is as important as the corresponding establishment, now existing, for the education of officers for the army, at West Point, we might show, that the naval profession is not less distinct from ordinary pursuits than the military, and, therefore, no less requires a specially adapted education. If, then, a preparatory education is as necessary to qualify a youth to become distinguished in the navy as in the army, it cannot be denied, that high qualifications, in the naval officer, are quite as essential to the safety and honor of the country. In time of war, the navy is to fight our battles at a distance from our shores ; surely our officers should not merely be brave, but skilled in all the arts that decide the fate of battles ; versed not merely in all that theory can suggest, but acquainted with every expedient, that has ever been resorted to, by the naval heroes of every age. In seasons of peace, our friendly relations with other powers are in no slight degree intrusted to the keeping of our naval commanders ; for it is on the common highway of the ocean, that our interests and honor are most often brought into collision with those of other powers. At all times, our ships of war are the representatives of our country, in every quarter of the globe ; it is chiefly by the worth, intelligence, and courtesy of their officers, that an estimate can be formed of the nation that sends them forth.

Our ideas of a naval academy, and they are unchanged since we first expressed them, ten years ago, in this Journal,* are, that it should be established in some healthy, isolated situation, with the sea in sight, affording constant opportunities of beholding the manœuvres of ships. The age of admission might be thirteen years, and the term of service either three or four years. The system of discipline should be rigid, yet paternal. Mathematics would, of course, form the groundwork of the pupils' education ; but its study should not be pursued beyond the point necessary to render the various problems of nautical astronomy intelligible. Upon this would be raised the superstructure of natural philosophy, astronomy, navigation, surveying, the principles of naval architecture,

* See *North American Review*, Vol. XXX. pp. 360, *et seq.*

and the theory of working ships. To these studies should be added a knowledge of history, of the laws of nations, and of the rules of composition. The French and Spanish languages, and drawing, should also be taught.

The exercises should consist in fencing, and the use of firearms ; but chiefly in the manœuvres of a small ship, of one or two hundred tons, moored near the academy. Rigging and stripping ship, exercising guns, reefing, furling, steering, and heaving the lead ; every operation, in short, should be performed by the lads themselves. Each class should have its proper station ; the junior class, on deck ; the next would know enough to be top-men ; and so on, with the stations of petty officers ; the senior class would do the duty of officers, and be stationed about, to direct and aid the efforts of the crew ; while in rotation one of the number would be invested with the command. One day in each week should be employed in a cruise round the harbour ; while, in summer, the ordinary season of vacation might be passed in an extended cruise along the coast. Every thing done, on board of such a vessel, would be done in the best manner ; the youths would have before them an epitome of their future profession, and would be constantly engaged in the actual execution of its details. If this system were introduced, it would furnish an invaluable groundwork of professional education to our officers. The first examination for admission would reject many applicants, and the subsequent years of probation would clear off all the stupid, vicious, and insubordinate. Those who should pass the ordeal creditably, and enter the navy as midshipmen, would be of the greatest use by their own services, no less than by stimulating the efforts of their superiors. With such an institution, we might dispense entirely with the schools existing at the several naval stations, and also with the present worthless and utterly abortive system of schools on board ship, where, in many cases, the schoolmaster is the occasion of stimulating little other ingenuity, than that of playing tricks, at his own expense, which tricks, however subversive of discipline, are sometimes encouraged by the contemptuous and disparaging treatment pursued by commanders towards this class of officers.

If it be of importance to take measures for the education of the officers of our navy, of still greater importance is it

to endeavour to establish a settled system for the manning of our fleets. We think, that a basis for such a system might be found in the law of Congress for the enlistment of apprentices into the navy. Even to the extent to which this system has been carried, it has been productive of good, by introducing a class of recruits into the navy very superior to any that have hitherto been entered. As yet, however, only five hundred apprentices have been entered since the law passed, nearly three years ago. At this rate, though the character of our seamen, petty officers, and warrant officers, may, in a course of years, be considerably improved, by the introduction into the service of a portion of better-trained materials of native stock, but little will be effected towards the great object of manning the navy with a class of native seamen, specially trained for it. We believe, however, that the apprentice system, properly expanded and judiciously carried out, may man the navy entirely in ten years. At present, the boys, of the character and propensities which lead them to go to sea, and make their parents willing that they should do so, are only taken from the four large cities where there are recruiting stations. Stations should be established at more numerous points, but on a smaller and less expensive scale, for entering apprentices for the navy; and advertisements should be published, far and wide in the country, setting forth the terms on which the government would receive them, and the obligations by which it would bind itself to furnish them with education, and a profession by which they could always support themselves comfortably, and rise in the navy, or merchant service, according to their degree of merit and ambition. In this way, a drag net might be thrown over the whole country, and probably two thousand boys, between thirteen and seventeen years of age, might be annually procured. As they improved, and distinguished themselves for good conduct, they should be advanced to be ordinary seamen and seamen, and, in the closing years of their apprenticeship, they would, many of them, be qualified to become petty officers. Graduated apprentices should have the preference for the stations of petty officers; and, as they advanced in experience and ability, the stations of boatswain and gunner should be likewise open to them. These stations are now often filled by foreigners, and, though the pay is handsome, are filled very badly. The

gunners of the service are particularly deficient, and unworthy of their station, though it is one of great responsibility and importance. Their annual pay, in a line-of-battle ship, amounts to near eight hundred dollars, and yet, perhaps, there are not three on the list thoroughly competent for their duty. There should be a school, for the education of gunners' mates and gunners, on board of our steamers of war, which should also be used, each summer, as a school of practice for gunnery, as is now the case with the *Fulton*. We should like to see the system of gunnery education, practised on board the *Excellent* at Portsmouth in England, introduced into the *Fulton* forthwith, and into the other steamers as they are completed. In this way we might soon have gunners, who would be Americans, and know their duty.

With regard to the naval apprentices, after a few months' preparatory training in the receiving-ships, to each of which a small cruiser, for exercise, might be attached, they should be sent on distant cruises, with rigid orders to the commanders to carry out a prescribed system of education. To prevent desertion among the apprentices, after they have become sailors, they should be kept well ahead of the purser, with large balances due them. At the expiration of their terms of service, they might receive a discharge which would entitle them to receive their pay, as on leave of absence, if returning within two months; and the same system might be pursued now towards petty officers and seamen, permitting them, at all times, to report themselves on board of any receiving-ship, at the expiration of two months from the time of their discharge, receiving their pay for the interval, and the same rank as in the last ship. By pursuing the apprentice system to its utmost limits, there is little doubt, that the navy would, within ten years, man itself entirely with native seamen, familiar with its ships and officers, and having all its interests warmly at heart. It would also serve to furnish skilful seamen to the merchant service, instead of being, as it now is, a drain upon it.

In the mean time, and until the apprentice system can be made the means of completely manning the navy, we should be sorry to see our ships continue in port, and our navy prevented from taking that extension, which the protection of commerce requires, by the want of seamen to fill up their complements. Let our ships, now waiting for crews, fill up

with any material they can get, so long as the number is complete, and sail. If they have sailors enough, petty officers included, to reef the maintop-sail, they can be taken care of from the first, and, in a few months of skilful training, will be able to perform every evolution creditably. The Independence, which spreads nearly as much canvass as the Pennsylvania, sailed from Boston, in 1837, with a crew of less than six hundred men, exclusive of officers. They were unusually young and light hands, and most of them entirely raw. Yet, from the moment of bending sails, there was no striking deficiency, and in a very few months the ship could enter into comparison, in the performance of evolutions, with the most practised cruisers. Any of the sloops, now waiting for crews, might perfectly well go to sea with three fourths of their crews composed of boys and landsmen. The difficulty of manning our ships, under the present system, would be much lessened, if the ships, returning from abroad, were to arrive in May and June, and those bound out to sail in July and August. The men would have a pleasant season to spend their hard-earned pay in, and would soon be ready to take service in the departing ships. Our ships, too, would approach and leave our coast in fine weather. The extensive mortality, which always occurs when ships are fitted out in the winter, and the many deaths which take place in the course of the cruise, clearly attributable to the same cause, might thus be avoided.

With regard to the character and construction of our ships, great necessity exists for the adoption of fixed principles, and settled models for every different class. The greatest difference of opinion exists, as to which are the best ships in the service, and most worthy to be adopted as models. The prevailing opinion is probably in favor of the Ohio, as a line-of-battle ship, the Constitution, United States, or President, as a frigate, the Vincennes, or John Adams, as a sloop, and the Spark, as a small vessel. It is highly desirable, on this account, to bring a number of our best vessels, of every different class, together, to cruise, with a view to establish, beyond a doubt, which are superior. This object, and that of the general improvement of the navy, could be easily effected by carrying out the proposition of Mr. Cooper for the perpetual maintenance of a cruising squadron of six or eight line-of-battle ships, accompanied by a number of the best frigates

and smaller vessels. Such a squadron would, at the same time, form a school for the perfecting of every thing belonging to the service, by affording a degree of competition which has never yet existed, and display the power of the republic, in every sea, in a manner well suited to protect the interests of our commerce. Whenever any coast became the scene of war or blockades, our fleet should appear on it, for the double purpose of observation and instruction to the officers, and of furnishing to our merchants the best possible guaranty against spoliation. In order that this guaranty may be more effectually rendered, not merely by our fleet of observation and experience, if we shall ever have one, but by our cruisers generally in every sea, we think that our commanders should be furnished with general instructions to regulate their conduct with regard to the protection of commerce, the respect to be paid to blockades, what blockades are valid and binding, and what are not ; also, with regard to affording refuge to political fugitives ; and whether they should, under any circumstances, land a portion of their crew, for the protection of American citizens, in moments of revolutionary struggle. It seems to us very clear, that portions of the crews of our ships should not be landed in cities, disturbed by insurrections, to protect the property of American citizens ; and yet this has occasionally been practised. The existence and efficiency of a man-of-war is thus jeopardized by the liability of a portion of her crew to be cut off, and with it her ability to perform her legitimate duty of receiving American citizens under the protection of the flag. Moreover, a commander, landing a portion of his crew, may thus be easily betrayed into a breach of neutrality. With regard to the reception of fugitives, it is true, that genuine patriots may, in seasons of domestic trouble, be compelled to fly for their lives ; but it is the duty of neutrals to respect the sovereignty of the port which offers them hospitality, and the dominant party which holds sway there by the will of the majority. If, however, hospitality should be granted to those who, when in peril of life from revolutionary movements, seek the hospitality and protection of our flag, the boats of our ships should, at any rate, never invade the sovereignty of a foreign state for the purpose of withdrawing criminals, or political delinquents, from its jurisdiction. The commander of a man-of-war loses his ability to protect his

own countrymen, and to fulfill his legitimate office of exerting his influence in their behalf, whenever he irritates the existing authorities of a country, by invading its sovereignty, and violating its independence.

We hope, then, for the sake of the interests and honor of the country, to see our naval commanders furnished with a brief and comprehensive code of international law, in the shape of concise orders, for the regulation of their conduct in all questions that are likely to occur to them in the prosecution of their responsible duties. These orders would distinctly instruct them, as to the control they would exercise over our merchantmen, the protection they should render them, when to allow them to be captured for a breach of virtual blockade, and when to stand to their guns in defence of them, when a blockade is illegal and ineffective. The conduct to be pursued, with regard to the demand of deserters from our service, and the delivery up of those from foreign services, should also be distinctly prescribed. We are of opinion, that deserters should never be delivered up, except by virtue of a reciprocal treaty stipulation.

By means of orders, such as we have described, the information, scattered over many volumes of international law, would be placed within the reach of our naval commanders, in the compass of a dozen pages, prescribing the line of their conduct, in whatever circumstances of difficulty they might be placed. Thus, in the conduct of our external relations, through the medium of our ships, the combined wisdom of our ablest jurists would be substituted for the erring guidance of minds not accustomed to grapple with legal problems, and, at the very moment when they are called on to decide and act with vigor, too often crushed by the pressure of a responsibility so much more formidable to them than cannonballs. It is true, that our commanders, when left to themselves, have generally acquitted themselves creditably of their important charge to protect the interests of commerce, and sustain the honor of our flag ; but it is also true, that they have occasionally made very pitiful exhibitions. We would wish to see these instructions, not merely issued to all our naval commanders, but published to the world, that foreign nations might not only be informed with regard to the settled policy of our country, on all the great principles of international law affecting the commerce of the seas, but also,

that we were ready, on all occasions, by force of arms, to defend it. So far from bringing us in collision with foreign nations, orders such as these, when published to the world, would be our sure guaranty from aggression. They would, moreover, be one step towards the triumph of justice throughout the world.

To form a just estimate of what should constitute the disposable force of our own navy, it is necessary to take into consideration the disposable naval force of other powers. There are no fewer than five powers that maintain, at this time, a stronger force in commission than we do; namely, England, France, Russia, Turkey, and Egypt. Were we suddenly to go to war with any one of the three former, we should necessarily be overpowered, blockaded, and driven temporarily from the ocean, in the first struggle. As, however, it is with England or France, that we are most likely to come in collision on the ocean, we will take a brief view of the force and condition of their navies. By a statement, made by an intelligent officer of our service recently employed in examining the condition of the European navies, it appears, that, in September last, the British navy, including ships in process of construction, consisted of ninety-one line-of-battle ships, one hundred frigates, twenty corvettes, twenty-three steam ships, and one hundred and seventy-six smaller vessels. Of these, twenty-three line-of-battle ships, ten frigates, eighteen corvettes, sixteen steam ships, and one hundred and fifty-one small vessels were actually in commission. The French navy consisted, at the same time, of forty-nine line-of-battle ships, sixty frigates, forty-four corvettes, thirty-one steam ships, and forty-six small vessels. Of these, eleven line-of-battle ships, seventeen frigates, twenty-four corvettes, twenty steam ships, and thirty-six small vessels were in commission. Let us now examine what was, at the same time, the condition of our own navy. We had eleven line-of-battle ships, seventeen frigates, fourteen corvettes, one steam ship, ten small vessels, and one store-ship. Of these, two line-of-battle ships, three frigates, thirteen sloops, one steam ship, ten small vessels, and the store-ship were in commission. The comparison of numbers, between our ships, as thus stated, and those of England and France, is absolutely ludicrous; and yet our commerce, the protection of which is the most legitimate object of a navy, is

rapidly approaching to an equality with that of England, and is three times that of France. If the disparity of numbers is so much against us, in a comparison of our navy with that of England and France, we are not so sure as we would wish to be, that a comparison, in other respects, would be more favorable to us. In the order of their ships, whether for appearance or for service, in the efficiency of the batteries, the arrangement of the sights and locks, the condition of the small arms, and their convenient arrangement for use, as well as in the habit of using them, in successful effort to attach the crews to the service, in every thing, in short, but the issue of ardent spirits and the infliction of the lash, we are not sure, that our navy would not suffer in a comparison with that of England. We fear, indeed, that the English navy, in its condition, bears somewhat the same relation to ours now, as ours did to it at the commencement of the late war. The acknowledgment is made reluctantly and with mortification, but with a view to reformation. With regard to the French navy, it is inferior to ours in the evolutions of single ships, and in seamanship generally ; but superior in the arrangement of the batteries, magazines, and small arms. Gunnery is more practised, and better understood, in the French navy than in ours. A familiarity, too, with the use of hollow shot, projected horizontally, gives them a great advantage over us. Shot of this description were first invented, in this country, towards the close of the war with England, by R. L. Stevens, Esquire, and some were preparing to be put on board the President frigate, when she sailed and was brought to action by a squadron of British ships. These shots, having been found, by experiment, to be very destructive, were put, formerly, on board of our ships of war ; but, of late years, the practice has been discontinued. In the mean time, the French have introduced them into all their ships. Four heavy guns, for the discharge of hollow shot, are placed in each of their large ships, and two in the smaller vessels. These hollow shot were found very effective in the attack on the castle of San Juan de Ulloa. The English are also introducing them into all their newly-fitted ships. It is time that our officers, also, should become acquainted with the use of a highly destructive missile, originally invented among us.

In full view of all these circumstances, we think, that, in

order to be prepared to come successfully out of any struggle, in which we may hereafter be involved, our naval preparations should be on a footing, to enable us to put to sea, within five years, with a force of forty sail of the line, and an equal number of frigates. Half of this force should be ready to sail within a year, the rest of the ships should be on the stocks, or in frames, ready to be set up. Six line-of-battle ships might be kept in commission, as a fleet of observation, and school of practice. Six frigates, with twenty sloops, and a dozen brigs, would suffice, for the ordinary protection of commerce, throughout the world; the fleet of line-of-battle ships being always ready to repair to a threatened point of hostilities or blockade.

A home squadron, of half a dozen vessels, would be exceedingly useful, for the purpose of relieving vessels coming on our coast at inclement seasons, and, at all times, as a school of practice and a nursery for seamen. The home squadron might, also, include all the revenue vessels, they being brought into the regular service. In England, where the temptation to smuggle is so much greater than here, the cruisers, which protect the revenue, form part of the regular service. There is no reason, why the same system should not answer here; and at a time when it is desirable to find useful employment for our officers, such a field for it, as the preventive service would afford, should not be neglected. The officers of our navy, taking part in this service, in turn, would all obtain accurate local information of our coasts and harbours, which would be of the greatest value to them. The present officers of the revenue service could be introduced into the navy as masters, and masters' mates, or placed upon pension. In times past, the revenue vessels have, occasionally, been commanded by naval officers, but not as belonging to the regular navy. If they have been guilty of misconduct, or failed to give satisfaction to the Treasury Department, they have been dismissed from their commands, without suffering at all as naval officers. If we were to adopt the preventive service, as it exists in England, in connexion with our home squadron, the system could not fail to work well, and the navy to derive great benefit from it.

Instead of the present system, of attaching a ship permanently to one station for three years, great benefit would be derived from introducing a rotation of stations. The ships,

which go first to the Mediterranean, might leave it, on the approach of winter, during which they do not cruise in that sea, and proceed to Brazil, by the Canary Islands, and the coast of Africa ; after remaining a year on the coast of Brazil, they might return homewards by the West Indies, completing their term of service on that station. In like manner, the East India ships might return by the Pacific and Brazil, as the *Columbia* and *John Adams*, indeed, are about to do ; and the Pacific ships, having remained on the coast of Brazil until the season should be favorable for passing Cape Horn, might circumnavigate the world in the contrary direction, returning by the East Indies and the Cape of Good Hope. Great advantage would result from this system, in the protection of commerce, as the field of cruising would be greatly extended, and our ships would be constantly appearing in remote quarters and unexpectedly. The object of professional improvement would be promoted, by our ships being almost constantly at sea, and the irksomeness of a long detention on a particular coast would be avoided. The flag ships might remain constantly on the same station, if it were deemed advisable. In addition to our present stations, the constant presence of a sloop, in the neighbourhood of our principal whaling station, for the time being, would be exceedingly useful to that valuable branch of commerce and nursery of seamen.

In addition to our present classes of ships, we should find great advantage in having three or four frigates, to draw not more than nineteen feet, for flag ships on the Brazil and West India stations. Vessels of this draft might be made to sail and perform well, and could enter the ports of the river La Plata with ease, as well as most of our southern harbours, and those of the Gulf of Mexico. Sloops of war will not answer the purpose, as they are not considered, abroad, sufficiently respectable to bear the flag of a commander-in-chief.

If we are not to have admirals, and without them we can never have a respectable or well-disciplined navy, at any rate our commodores should never be permitted to go to sea without captains to command their ships. Commodores, without captains under them, scarcely ever merit the name. They are merely captains of particular ships, often making use of their superiority only to render the other ships of the squadron subservient to their own, instead of feeling an equal

interest in all. Moreover, from the advanced age at which they usually reach this station, they are unsuited to handle their ships in a skilful and dashing manner. The mature judgment and caution, which would fit them to govern fleets, as admirals, are not so applicable to the active command of single ships, which requires promptness and excitability. We are of opinion, that, in addition to captains in all flag ships, it would be highly conducive to discipline, if the executive duty, now assigned to the first lieutenant, were performed by commanders in all our line-of-battle ships and frigates. No vessel, however small, which is sent on a foreign station, should be commanded by a lower class of officers, than that of commander ; and vessels commanded by lieutenants, on the home station, should have passed midshipmen to keep the watches.

Among the existing evils of the service, is the frequent change of officers in our ships. In no case should an officer be transferred from the ship in which he originally sailed, unless his health should be so much impaired, as, in the case of a seaman, would lead to his being sent home as an invalid. Nothing occasions so much discouragement among the seamen of a ship, as to find their officers leaving them, either to go home, or to pass to another ship. The evil of a change of commanders is of course much greater, and should, if possible, never be incurred.

Another evil, of greater magnitude, is keeping a crew out beyond the term of their enlistment. Besides disgusting seamen with the service, and discouraging their return to it, it often leads to acts of insubordination at the termination of the cruise, which are deplorable in themselves and fatal in their example. Nor is this evil much abated, where men on foreign stations, towards the end of the term of their service, when they should be on their way home to be discharged, are cajoled to reënter until the return of the ship to the United States. In the first place, a favor is to be asked of those, who, while on board of our ships, should be required only to obey. In the second place, the choice is not honestly offered them. They would all prefer going home and being discharged, when their times should be out ; but the bribery of a week's liberty and two or three months' pay, after years of close and almost uninterrupted confinement, is more than they can resist. A dishonest bargain is made with them, and on

their arrival in the United States, they burst the bonds of discipline, and enact scenes disgraceful to the service, and permanently prejudicial to its character. Three years are quite long enough for our officers and seamen to be absent from their country, and we should be glad to see our ships return much within that time.

In concluding these remarks, which a strong interest in the subject has led us to extend far beyond our intention, we would express the fervent hope, that our navy may, ere long, receive the extension and improvement, which the best interests of the country demand.

ART. VII. — *Dictionary of Latin Synonymes, for the Use of Schools and Private Students ; with a Complete Index.* By LEWIS RAMSHORN. *From the German ;* by FRANCIS LIEBER. Boston : Charles C. Little & James Brown. 1839. 8vo. pp. viii. and 475.

WE are glad to see, in our own language, a translation of this valuable work of an eminent German scholar and practical instructor. If the Latin language is still to be a part of our course of education, — and we hope it will long continue to be so, — it must be studied with the aid of such works as the present ; for which, indeed, we shall be obliged, for some time, to look to Germany, now at the head of the literature of all Europe.

The volume before us is not the original work of Dr. Ramshorn, but an *abridgment* of it, made by the author himself, expressly for the use of schools. The principal difference, however, between the two is, that while the vocabularies agree, the larger work has a more extensive list of authorities under each word, and has also a designation of the book and section of the Roman authors in whose writings the citations are to be found ; but the present abridgment has only the name of the author, without a reference to the book or chapter of his work. By this arrangement, the work is comprised within a moderate compass, and is thus better adapted to the use of schools and students in general.

The French philosopher, D'Alembert, remarks, that, in addition to the different significations of the same word, a philosophical grammarian must examine in what cases differ-